GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE
LOK SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:887
ANSWERED ON:27.02.2015
ILLEGAL USE OF X-RAY MACHINES
Birla Shri Om

Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the X-ray machines are reportedly being used illegally in the diagnostic centres and nursing homes across the country;

(b) if so, the details thereof, State/UTwise including Rajasthan and the reasons therefor;

(c) the States where Directorate of Radiation Safety (DRS) have been set up to regulate these centres under the Atomic Energy (Radiation Protection) Rules;

(d) the steps taken/being taken by the Government to strictly enforce the same; and

(e) the action taken by the Government against the illegal diagnostic centres and nursing homes so far?

Answer

THE MINISTER OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (SHRI JAGAT PRAKASH NADDA)

(a) & (b): As per the information provided by the Atomic Energy Regulatory Board (AERB), there are medical diagnostic x-ray facilities throughout the country who have not yet applied to AERB for regi- stration/licensing as per the requirement of Atomic Energy (Radiation Protection) Rules, 2004. The state-wise details of licensed X-ray equipment as per e-licensing procedure of AERB are at Annexure.

(c): The Directorate of Radiation Safety (DRS) has been set up in Kerala, Mizoram and Chhattisgarh.

(d): There are a large number of diagnostic X-ray units/facilities spread across the country and there is an accelerated growth in their numbers. While the radiation hazard involved in such faci- lities is generally low, a series of measures have been undertaken by AERB to bring such units under radiation safety certification of AERB.

Apart from pursuing the formation of DRS with State Governments, AERB has devised an improved regulatory model for the effective regulatory control of such large number of X-ray units. Following are the st- rategies being pursued/already in place:

AERB has decentralized its regulatory functions through the establishment of Regional Regulatory Centers (RRC) in the Southern, Eastern and recently at Northern Regions.

Revision of AERB Safety Code with rationalized regulations for stakeholders of diagnostic X-ray practice.

Enhancing regulatory control on manufacturer/ supplier by issuance of Licence/Authorization. It is a statutory requirement for these stakeho- lders to guide their customers to obtain AERB license to operate their X-ray equipment.

Developed an online interface (e-Licensing of radiation applications e-LORA) for the stakeholders to enable faster filing of applications and issuance of Licenses.

Increased number of Regulatory Inspections.

Periodic advertisements in print media as well as on AERB websites for users to buy AERB design approved (type approved) equipment and to get registered in AERB e-licensing portal (e-LORA).

In addition, for establishing a more effective regulatory set-up for X-ray units, AERB has been pursuing with State Governments/Union Territories for formation of State level Directorates of Radiation Safety (DRS) under the Health & Family Department of the respective State Governments/ Union Territories. As on date, AERB has signed MoUs with a total of 12 States (Kerala, Mizoram, Madhya Pradesh, Tamil Nadu, Punjab, Chhattisgarh, Himachal Pradesh, Gujarat, Maharashtra, Odisha, Arunachal Pradesh and Tripura) of which DRS in Kerala, Mozoram and Chhattisgarh are already functioning.

(e): There is an encouraging response to the various steps undertaken by AERB. As on date, 10,235 x-ray equipment are licensed by AERB. AERB is providing a time period of six months for the voluntary regis- tering of diagnostic x-ray equipment through the e-LORA

system. AERB is also issuing warning letters/ show cause notices to the non-complying Institutions. Presently AERB has in hand an action plan for other enforcement actions to be initiated against non- compliant institutions as per Atomic Energy (Radia- tion Protection) Rules, 2004.